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No. 4.

Mormonism Exposed.

THE OTHER SIDE.

A CLERGYMAN'S VIEW OF THE CASE.

BY

REV. JOHN C. KIMBALL,

Of Hartford, Conn.

Copied from "The Index," Boston, Mass.

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Gentile Testimony to Mormon Worth.

It is a great satisfaction to find *The Index*, at this test point of the Mormon question, acting in complete harmony with its professions as the organ of free thought by giving to each side of it a fair and equal hearing. A few years ago, it was almost impossible to get a word into an eastern journal aiming to solve it on any broad and generous principles; even our well-known Unitarian paper, pre-eminent for its general fairness, refusing, after printing columns against the Mormons, to give on the other side the testimony of the United States census, and of such men as Bishop Tuttle, Chief Justice White, and the Hon. Hugh McCullough, simply correcting its own mistakes. It is not by any means the greatest question before the public, but it is one which touches some points of religious freedom and of its relation to moral judgments more deeply than any other. And it is one which, not only on its own account, but in the interest of all religion, needs full and frank discussion.

The first step in this, as in all such questions, is to do justice to the Mormons themselves, recognize all that is worthy and good among them, and then, from the vantage-ground of this justice, assail what is wrong and bad. Mr. Potter speaks of the difficulty of getting at the exact facts with regard to their condition, such contradictory stories are told about them, and ascribes the good said of them to the circumstance that visitors in Utah for a short time see only the surface of things, and are so dazed with its material prosperity as to make their testimony of but little worth. This may be true in some cases; but, on the other hand, it is to be remembered that the bad which is told of them is quite as likely to rise from the

prejudice, narrowness, and conflicting interests of those who are at their very doors. Nearness of residence, where these qualities exist, is very far from increasing the value of a person's testimony. Who has implicit confidence in a Californian's denunciation of the Chinese, or in a western squatter's diatribe against the Indians, or in a Protestant theologian's strictures on Roman Catholicism? So with the criticisms of Utah Gentiles on their Mormon neighbors. The religious prejudice against them is immense—a prejudice which is aggravated still more by the sight of their material prosperity, and also, it must be confessed, by their aristocratic bearing and their social exclusiveness. And it is wonderful how this prejudice blinds the eyes of otherwise sensible people to some of the most common things about them, one writer from Salt Lake City to the *Christian Register*, betraying an ignorance of their family customs that every most casual visitor is sure to see, another testifying to a prevalence of ignorance and drunkenness among their young, that the slightest examination of local records would at once have disproved, and another being apparently unacquainted with the fact of a trial which must have taken place under her very ears.

Then, where this prejudice does not exist among the observers themselves, the fear of it in others is often a cause of the difficulty there is in getting at the exact facts. Shortly after my own visit to Salt Lake City, I fell in with a Baptist minister who had spent several months there for the benefit of his health. We naturally compared notes about our experiences; and he told me of the dislike and misconception, gathered up at home, with which he had gone to the place, and how, little by little, they had been melted away, and his dislike turned to admiration. I asked him why, for the sake of justice, he did not publish in some eastern newspaper the result of his observations. "Oh," he exclaimed, "it would not do. I should only ruin my own reputation, and nobody would believe me. I should either be accused of

having become a convert to polygamy or else of being a credulous fool whose eyes a little Mormon flattery had blinded to its enormities." The editor of a popular magazine, returning to its writer an article on Utah that, from the literary standpoint, gave a genial description of Mormon social life, said, "I have no doubt that what you say is all true, but it would ruin us to publish it." And two ladies, awhile ago, traveling all the way from Salt Lake City to attend a woman's suffrage convention, were not allowed to present the result of the suffrage experiment in Utah, because their recognition, as they were told, would compromise its friends too much here at the east.

But in spite of all these difficulties, there are Gentiles who have had the largeness of vision to look at Mormonism as they would at any other religion, and the courage to present what they have seen fairly to the public. Some of them are men who have lived in Utah for years in daily contact with its people, so as to know for certainty whereof they speak; while others, though visitors, were travelers and public men of that world-wide experience which precludes all thought of their having been dazzled or fooled by any flattery or outside glitter. And as helping to throw reliable light on this question of what the Mormons really are, and to sustain what Mr. Curtis and others of us less known have said from our own observations, let me quote briefly the testimony of these indisputable authorities.

Rev. D. S. Tuttle, bishop of the Episcopal church in the Utah Diocese, and a resident for some twelve years in Salt Lake City, a man whose opportunity and capacity for fair judgment no one can question, says of them in a lecture delivered in New York and published in the *Sun* of November, 1877: "*I know that the people of the East have judged them unjustly.* We are accustomed to look on them as either a licentious, arrogant, or rebellious mob, bent only on defying the United States government and as deriding the faith of

Christians. This is not so. *I know them to be honest, faithful, prayerful workers.*"

Hon. Hugh McCullough, ex-Secretary of the United States Treasury, writes in the New York *Tribune*, of March 29, 1877: "The people of the United States are under obligations to the Mormons. One can hardly repress a feeling of admiration for their courage, patience and power of endurance. They have opened and improved a region which, but for them, would have been neglected. They have brought to the country many thousands of industrious, peaceable and skilful people, and added largely to its wealth. Good judges and honest officials should be sent them; and in other respects, the federal government should let them severely alone. Their history will afford abundant materials for philosophical speculation, but there is no danger of their being a political or social disturbance."

Bayard Taylor says: "We must admit that Salt Lake City is *one of the most quiet, orderly and moral* places in the world. The Mormons, as a people, are the most temperate of Americans. They are chaste, laborious and generally cheerful."

Dr. Miller, editor of the Omaha *Herald*, says: "To the lasting honor of the Mormon people and system, for twenty-five years such machines of moral infamy as whiskey shops, harlotries, faro banks, and all the attendants of vice and iniquity, were totally unknown in Utah. But now these hydra-headed monsters are gaining foothold in Salt Lake City; and the damning fact is that it is only by the surreptitious evasion and overthrow of Mormon authority that these and kindred curses now evade it."

Mrs. Emily Pitt Stevens, editor of the *Pioneer*, a woman's journal, says: "In Salt Lake City there is less rowdyism, drunkenness, gambling, idleness, theft, conspiracy against the peace of society, and crime generally than in any other city of the same population in the country, if not on the globe."

Elder Miles Grant, the well-known Adventist preacher, says: "There is *less licentiousness* in Salt Lake City than in any other of the same size in the United States; and were we to bring up a family of children in these last days of wickedness, we should have less fear of their moral corruption in that city than in any other."

General Thomas L. Kane, of Pennsylvania, after four years' experience among them, says: "I have not heard a single charge made against them as a community—against their habitual purity of life, their willing integrity, their toleration of religious differences, their regard for the laws, their devotion to the constitutional government under which we live—that I do not from my own observation or from the testimony of others *know to be false.*"

R. N. Baskin, Esq., United States prosecuting attorney in Utah, and a strong anti-Mormon, testified before the Committee on Territories of the United States House of Representatives: "I have been for five years past a resident of Utah. I must do the Mormons the justice to say that the question of religion does not enter into their courts in ordinary cases. I have never detected any bias on the part of jurors there in this respect, as I at first expected. I have appeared in cases where Mormons and Gentiles were opposing parties, and saw, much to my surprise, the jury do what was right"—a sworn statement of a United States officer, which may well offset the assertion of a recent writer in a religious newspaper that "nine-tenths of the people of the Territory are pledged to defeat the ends of justice," yet one which as a reply that newspaper refused to print.

A special committee of the Nevada State Senate, appointed to report on the question of annexing Utah to Nevada, say: "Utah is without a territorial or county debt. The traffic in spirituous liquors is under complete control. Gambling and houses of ill-fame are not tolerated. *Its school system is unsurpassed* in its adaptation to the wants of the masses"—an

official document which surely is of more weight than the assertion of Prof. Marden, in the *Christian Union*, "that non-Mormon teachers are excluded from their system of schools, and that Mormon doctrines are assiduously taught."

Chief Justice White, of the United States Bench, in charging the grand jury, at Salt Lake City, Utah, February, 1876, says: "No matter how much I differ from them [the Mormons] in belief, nor how widely they differ from the American people in matters of religion, yet testing them and it by a standard which the world recognizes as just, they deserve higher consideration than has ever been accorded to them. Industry, frugality, temperance, honesty, and, in every respect but one—the legislation against polygamy—obedience to law are with them the common practices of life. This land they have redeemed from sterility and made the habitation of a numerous people, where a beggar is never seen and where almshouses are neither needed nor known."

With regard to the complicity of the Mormons in the Mountain Meadows massacre, a crime with which even now they are continually charged at the east—the United States district attorney who had charge of the case said, in his plea at the trial: "I have been engaged constantly during the last three months in sifting facts and everything related to or connected with the massacre; and I have given the jury *unanswerable documentary evidence, proving that the authorities of the Mormon Church knew nothing of the butchery* till after it was committed. I have had all the assistance—from the Mormons—any official could ask on earth in any case."* (See report of the trial.) How could any testimony be more explicit or authoritative? And yet I could not get these words inserted in a professedly liberal religious paper at the east as an answer to a charge already made in its columns

* These were the words of Mr. Sumner Howard, U. S. Prosecuting Attorney for Utah, at the trial of John D. Lee, held at Beaver, Utah, September term, 1876.

that the Mormons were guilty of the outrage, the exclusion being as peremptory and complete as any facts bearing on the anti-slavery side in a case before a United States court would have been from the most one-sided pro-slavery journal at the south before the war.

Capt. Burton, in his *City of the Saints*, published by the Harpers in 1862, a very minute and impartial work, says, among a multitude of other things: "Mormonism is emphatically the faith of the poor." "I cannot help thinking that morally and spiritually as well as physically its *proteges* gain by their transfer from Europe to Utah." "In point of mere morality, the Mormon community is perhaps purer than any other of equal numbers." "The penalties against chastity, morality and decency are exceptionally severe." "I was much pleased with their religious tolerance. The Mormons are certainly the *least fanatical* of our faiths, owning, like the Hindus, that every man should walk his own way, while claiming for themselves superiority in belief and practice."

Among the more recent testimonies in the same direction is that of James W. Barclay, M. P., an English visitor of fair and temperate judgment, who says in his article, "A New View of Mormonism," published in the January number of the *National Quarterly Review:* "The Mormon community is an enlarged family bound together by privilges and duties, one principal duty being to care for the helpless and needy. At the same time, every individual has full freedom of action. There is no compulsion on any Mormon beyond the public opinion of his fellows, and none is possible. All are equal. There is no special or privileged class or caste. The people in the fullest sense govern themselves"—statements especially to be commended to the attention of those who, in default of anything else, charge Mormonism with being a vast and rigid hierarchy, under which no one is free. "I apprehend that the animosity to Mormonism is principally due to the efforts of

the hosts of hungry office seekers who would find lucrative posts in Utah, were the Mormons disfranchised; and to the missionaries from the eastern States, who come to turn the Mormons from the error of their ways, and whose income depends on the strength of the feeling they can excite. If the Mormons could be disfranchised in a body, five hundred lucrative posts in Utah would be open to Gentile office seekers"—and does Free Religion want to play into such hands? "It is a mistake to suppose there are no educated Mormon women. Some of them have written with ability in defense of polygamy. The young ladies appeared as free and independent as in other parts of the United States." "The men of position correspond favorably with the same class in the eastern States. I was much impressed by their ability, courtesy and general intelligence. They have a quiet, self-reliant, gentlemanly bearing." "In morality, the Mormons *greatly excel the Gentiles* in their midst. The figures conclusively prove that the Mormons are a sober, law-abiding people, and singularly free from the grosser forms of vice, whatever may be alleged to the contrary by ignorant or prejudiced enemies." "Let me say in conclusion that I went to Utah prejudiced against the Mormons; but after seeing and investigating them myself, I came to the conclusion that, apart from polygamy there is much in the Mormon organization to admire and respect, and that the Mormons are the subjects of a greater amount of misrepresentation and unjust abuse than any other community with which I am acquainted."

Equally explicit and favorable is the testimony of Mr. Phil Robinson, of the London *Telegraph*, an English traveler of wide experience all over the world, and of unquestioned reliability, who in 1882 spent three months in Utah. He says in his *Sinners and Saints*, a very readable book: "I have seen and spoken to and lived with Mormon men and women of every class, and never in my life in any Christian country

have I come in contact with more consistent piety, sobriety and neighborly charity. I say this deliberately. Without a particle of odious sanctimony, these folks are in their words and actions as Christian as I ever thought to see men and women." "The Mormons are a peasant people, with many of the faults of peasant life, but with many of the best human virtues as well." "The demeanor of the women in Utah, as compared with, say Brighton or Washington, is modesty itself; and the children are just such healthy, vigorous, pretty children as one sees in the country or by the seaside in England." "Utah-born girls, the offspring of plural wives, have figures that would make Paris envious; and they carry themselves with almost oriental dignity. There is nothing, so far as I have seen, in the manners of Salt Lake City to make me suspect the existence of that licentiousness of which so much has been written; but a great deal on the contrary to convince me of a perfectly exceptional reserve and self-respect. It is only a blockhead who could mistake the natural gayety of the country for anything other than it is. I know, too, from medical assurance, that Utah has the practical argument of healthy nurseries to oppose to the theories of those who attack its domestic relations on physiological grounds." "*A healthier and more stalwart community* I have never seen; while among the women I saw many refined faces, and remarked that robust health seemed the rule." "Mutual charity is one of the bonds of Mormon union. It is published officially that 'the bishops of every ward are to see that there are no persons going hungry.' What a contrast to turn from this text of universal charity to the infinite meanness of those who can write of the whole community of Mormons as 'the villainous spawn of polygamy!'" "Instead of the Mormons being as a class profane, they are as a class singularly sober in their language, and indeed in this respect resemble the Quakers." "The Mormons have always struggled hard to prevent the sale of liquor; and it is not only the Mormon leaders, but

the Mormon people that refuse to have drunkards among them."

Equally strong is the testimony of Mr. Robinson against the charge so often made by those who are obliged to admit their virtues in all other respects that the people are priest-ridden, the fact being that each one of them is himself a priest, and that it is about as absurd to speak of Utah as priest-ridden as it would be to speak of the rest of the country as voter-ridden. "The payment of tithings is as nearly voluntary as the collection of a revenue necessary for carrying on a government can possibly be allowed to be." "*If the women of Utah are slaves, their bonds are loving ones and dearly prized.* They are to-day in the free and unrestricted exercise of more political and social rights than are the women of any other part of the United States." "It is not true that the Church interferes with the domestic relations of the people. When I remember what classes of people their men and women are chiefly drawn from, and the utter poverty in which most of them arrive, I cannot in sincerity do otherwise than admire and respect the system which has fused such unpromising material of so many nationalities into one homogeneous whole."

With regard to the misrepresentations of Mormonism, he says: "Whence have the public derived their opinions about it? From anti-Mormons only. I have ransacked the literature of the subject, yet I really could not tell any one where to go for an impartial book about it later in date than Burton's *City of the Saints*, published in 1862. There is not, to my knowledge, a single Gentile work before the public that is not utterly unreliable from its distortion of facts. How can any one have respect for the literature or the men who, without knowing anything of the lives of Mormons, stigmatize them as profane, adulterous and drunken? These men write of the squalid poverty of the Mormons, of their obscene brutality, of their unceasing treason toward the United States, of their

blasphemous repudiation of the Bible, without one particle of information on the subject, except such as they gather from the books and writings of men whom they ought to know are utterly unworthy of credit, or from the verbal calumnies of apostates; and what the evidence of apostates is worth history has long ago told us." "I am now stating facts; and I, who have lived among the Mormons and with them, can assure my readers that every day of my residence increased my *regret at the misrepresentation these people have suffered.*"

Still stronger is the evidence derived from official statistics as to their intelligence and virtues. In Salt Lake City in 1881, the published reports show that the arrests for crime were *fourteen times* as many among the Gentiles in proportion to their numbers as among the Mormons; and taking the Territory as a whole, the Gentile population furnished *forty-six* convicts in the penitentiary where the Mormon population, number for number, furnished one! According to the United States census, Massachusetts has four times as many convicts to the same population as Utah, four and a half times as many idiotic and insane, and nine times as many paupers. Utah, in school attendance, according to the same authority, is ahead of Massachusetts; and with all that has been said about the ignorance of its people and its immense foreign immigration, its proportion of people who cannot read or write is put down as less than that of New England. And still more striking, the women there, instead of being kept in ignorance and subjection, are educated in the same studies and to the same extent as the boys and men, and are equally fitted to earn their own living out in the world and to maintain an independent career—a very significant fact, in view of Mr. Potter's statement that polygamy "could gain no foothold to-day among a people where woman should be educated as man's equal."

Most recent of all is an article by "H. H." (Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson), in the May number of the *Century*, on "The

Women of the Beehive," not at all in sympathy with the Mormon religion, and very strongly against polygamy, but giving such testimony as the following to the virtues and character of the Mormon people: "The more honest, industrious, simple-minded and upright a man is, the better Mormon he will be, if he be a Mormon at all. How these old-fashioned virtues thrive on a diet of fanatical religion, the prosperous farms of Utah give proof. The Mormon gospel is a gospel of labor. Industry and simplicity of living are its strongest precepts." "But it is the woman's view of it, her position and belief with regard to it, which are most misrepresented and misunderstood by the world." "A true understanding of the conscientious, religious Mormon woman's position and belief would work a revolution in the general sentiment of the outside world toward her." "There never was a class or sect of women since the world began who have endured for religion's sake a tithe of what has been and is and forever must be endured by the women of the Mormon Church. It has become customary to hold them as disreputable women, light and loose, unfit to associate with the virtuous, undeserving of esteem. *Never was a greater injustice committed.*" "The passage of the Edmunds anti-polygamy bill, disfranchising all perions living in polygamy and making the practice of it a penitentiary offence, has, so far as can at present be judged, only kindled new flames of self-sacrifice in the hearts of Mormon women." "This sort of spirit in the Mormon women was not reckoned on, probably, by those who thought polygamy could be greatly affected by legislation." "It is entirely within the power of the Mormon women to turn any anti-polygamy bill into a farce. There would not be penitentiaries enough to hold them, nor funds to feed them at the United States expense; and it is not easy to see what further device the baffled authorities would employ." "But true signs of the times no wise leaders will disregard. The Mormon people as a people are too upright, industrious

and moral, have worked too long and well, and achieved too splendid a success, to have their future again imperiled by being brought into active hostility with the majority of their fellow-countrymen."

Now, what community on earth can present higher, stronger or more conclusive testimony as to its virtues and intelligence than this? Ought it not to outweigh any amount of statements made by narrow, bitter, prejudiced, partisan leaders at home and abroad? It covers almost every possible point of good citizenship—those of education, patriotism, liberty, domestic life, morals and religion, as well as of industry, thrift and material well-being. And, in view of it, was there ever a greater outrage attempted against a people on earth, even under the most tyrannical government, than the Edmunds bill, already passed, and the Hoar bill, now before Congress? Compare the state of things in Utah revealed by these accounts with what exists in our monogamous communities at the east. Why, I live in a New England State which in every one of these respects is inferior to Utah—a State where actually a larger proportion of the Protestant men have more than one wife living than in Utah, the only difference being that there they are all supported by their husbands and made a part of the home, while here the first ones have been driven out into the world to shift for themselves.

What does this difference show? Not indeed, as Mr. Potter says, that polygamy in itself or for the country at large is better than monogamy—for in itself and elsewhere it is not regarded as a religious principle, a view which makes all the difference in the world—but only that, for Utah and in connection with the Mormon religion, it is producing no such evils as to call for the interference of the general government. It may be "a crime," but it is a crime legally, and not morally—a crime only as the breaking of the Lord's day is one in Connecticut, and not as theft, slavery and murder are every-

where. Marriage, in itself, whether monogamic or polygamous, is intrinsically without moral character. It is simply a social regulation: is, like Sunday, something which is made for man and not man for that. It is a means to an end—a means to promote purity, domestic happiness, the proper care of children, the elevation of the sexes, and the general well-being of society. And which form of it is best, or whether any form of it is best, and how and by whom it shall be performed, is to be determined by its results in each community; for it is a community interest, and of course by the will of each community. I believe in monogamy as our proper form of it, because it is our free choice, meets our hearts' need, and, in spite of some great evils rising out of it, has proved itself best adapted to promote our social welfare. Why should not the Mormons be allowed in the same way and on the same grounds to decide what form of it is best for them, exposed only to such moral influences from without as all communities give each other, the test being simply its results in their own case? To be sure, polygamy in the past and in other communities "has been connected with a low state of civilization," has served, as Mr. Potter says, "to pander to and strengthen man's animal passions, and to keep woman in a state of subjection;" and, theoretically, it seems to me, as it does to him, that it must now inevitably do the same wherever it is. But the question is not what it did in a past age and in other communities, or what it ought theoretically to do everywhere now, but what it does to-day actually in Utah. Government is concerned not in upholding or putting down some special institution on its own account and in accordance with some ideal of society, but in promoting and guarding the well-being of its citizens under such ones as they themselves have chosen, it being especially the fundamental principle of our own government that each community large enough to become a State shall regulate all its own domestic affairs. And, if Utah shows practically—and here is where the force of the testi-

mony quoted comes in—that polygamy, guarded and penetrated by the Mormon religion, produces as much happiness, intelligence, morality, freedom, and of all the virtues, prosperities and satisfactions of life for its citizens as monogamy does in other communities for theirs, shows especially that woman, instead of being "in a state of subjugation to man," is freer, better paid, and has more civil rights than elsewhere, then surely Free Religion and Christianity both, with their emphasis on the spirit rather than on the letter, ought to be the last ones to advocate, for the mere sake of upholding an institution, that monogamy with its attendant evils, now shown by statistics to be so much greater among the Gentiles there, should be arbitrarily thrust on it by the Federal Government.

A while ago, at a woman's suffrage convention here in New England, I heard a Baptist brother tell the ladies that they ought to be willing to fail of getting their rights on Bible grounds rather than to succeed in securing them by any arguments outside of and contrary to Scripture. And once an orthodox believer, disputing with his Unitarian neighbor about the value of their two systems, on being hard pressed with facts, shouted at last in desperation: "Well, I don't care! I had rather be damned in orthodoxy than saved by Unitarianism." It is a loyality to the means rather than to the end, which sounds ludicrous in their cases; and yet what is much of the discussion about enforcing monogamy on Utah, whatever virtues polygamy may show, but a use of the same principle? What but a saying it is better to have society fail of its great ends on Gentile grounds than to succeed on those of Mormonism; better to have it damned with a monogamy which by actual count furnishes ninety eight per cent. of the criminals in its penitentiary rather than saved by a polygamy which furnishes only two!

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